



# REPORT ON THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE'S *1st Senior Enlisted Advisors Forum*



THE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

*This document is available electronically:  
<http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/1stSEAFforum>*



Dear Enlisted Member:

I am pleased to present you with a report on the First Annual Senior Enlisted Advisors Forum, which was held at the Pentagon, June 2000. Seventy-nine E-9s and 60 spouses represented you, the backbone of our Total Force—Active, National Guard and Reserve. The Forum was an important step forward in our ongoing efforts to enhance communication and improve the quality of life for you and your families who serve our nation so well.

Mrs. Cohen and I had two principal reasons for inviting these representatives to Washington. First, we wanted to recognize and acknowledge the special trust and responsibility they hold as defenders of the security of our Nation. We were able to thank them firsthand for their leadership and many contributions to America's military. Second, we wanted to initiate a process for conducting face-to-face dialogues about the most pressing quality of life challenges facing our Total Force and reacting appropriately and constructively to those issues.

The report gives an overview of the Forum, summarizes key issues identified by the participants, and reviews the Department's responses and follow-up actions now being taken. The value of using the interactive setting to exchange information, capture concerns, and offer initial answers is immeasurable and I hope that we have set a tone and standard for others to follow in the future.

In order to maintain America's military as a standard of excellence, we will continue to rely on your advice, leadership, motivation and dedication. On behalf of the entire Department of Defense, thank you for your service and sacrifice.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill Cohen", written over a horizontal line.



## Forum Overview

Senior enlisted advisors with a combined 2,000 years of NCO experience, and their spouses, attended the Secretary of Defense's First Annual Senior Enlisted Advisors Forum. These trusted advisors gathered to converse with senior

DoD leadership about the challenges faced by today's enlisted personnel, and to discuss DoD's efforts to address the key issues affecting the quality of life and readiness of the force. Seventy-nine E-9's and 60 spouses took part in the day-long session of information sharing and cooperative problem-solving.

***"We commend you and your family for your outstanding service, sacrifice, and dedication."***

***—Secretary of Defense  
William S. Cohen***

The impressive gathering, which included representatives from every enlisted component—Active, Reserve, and National Guard—was also assembled to receive the gratitude of the Department of Defense for their continued leadership, commitment, and excellence in service to our country.

The Honorable Bernard Rostker, Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and

Readiness opened the Forum by welcoming the participants, and Mr. Brian Sheridan spoke on key foreign policy issues on behalf of the Honorable Walter Slocombe, Undersecretary of Defense for Policy. The senior enlisted advisors and spouses were also treated to a lively presentation on combating terrorism by Brigadier General John Sattler, USMC, Deputy Director of Operations, Joint Staff.

Following the introductory remarks, the senior enlisted advisors for each

Service were briefed on, and given the opportunity to discuss, issues of concern to each specific Service. Spouses participated in a Quality of Life Panel moderated by Mr. Victor Vasquez, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policy.

General Richard B. Myers, USAF, Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, seated here with Mrs. Cohen, hosted a luncheon to honor the senior enlisted and spouses. In commending military personnel and their families, he said, "We've got to make sure they've got the tangible thanks of a grateful nation, not just our grateful words. We're working hard to make that come true."



*Participants of the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Senior Enlisted Advisors Forum are greeted at the Pentagon River Entrance by Vice Admiral Greg Johnson, U.S. Navy, and Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Reserve Affairs) Charles Cragin. Johnson is the Senior Military Assistant to the Secretary of Defense.*







After lunch, Secretary Cohen greeted attendees and welcomed them to participate in small groups held on five issue areas: Child Care; Compensation; Health Care/TRICARE; Recruitment and Retention; and Schools, Education, and Quality

of Life Issues. Each participant had the opportunity to attend three different sessions in which they were invited to share concerns and suggest solutions.

DoD subject matter experts were present in each session to address questions, offer information, and most importantly, to hear from the NCOs and spouses the concerns of enlisted personnel. The issues identified in these sessions are presented in the following pages.



representatives, and one spouse gave an outbrief to the Secretary of Defense on the key issues in each topic area.

Secretary Cohen responded to these issues, in part, by saying, "We can serve you well when we hear what you need."

A reception and dinner, hosted by the Cohens, served as a final opportunity to honor the service and sacrifice of our Senior Enlisted personnel and to thank them for their dedication.



***"(We have) the finest military in the world...And the rest of us are grateful beneficiaries."***

***—Mrs. Janet Langhart Cohen***

In the forum's closing, the Secretary of Defense heard from the senior enlisted. Service

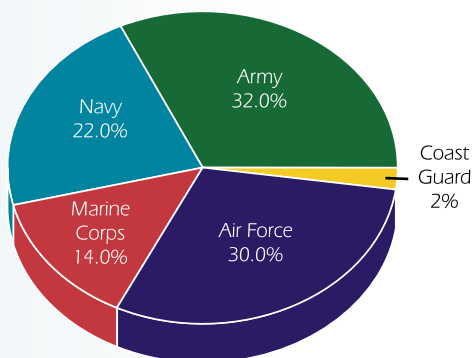


# Enlisted Personnel

## Senior Enlisted Advisor Forum Participants

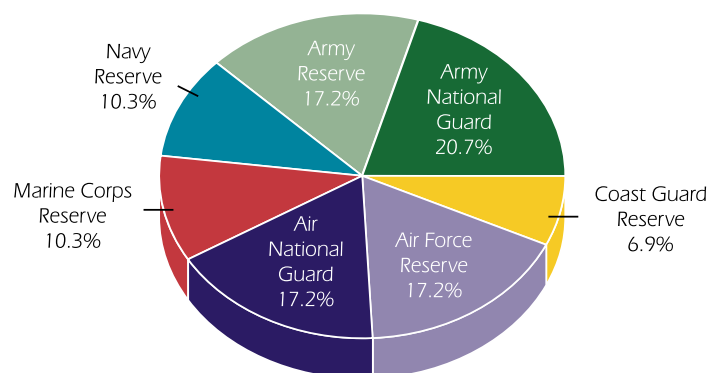
E-9 participants represented the enlisted personnel of all services, including both active duty and reserves. A total of 79 senior enlisted advisors and 60 spouses attended the Forum. Forum participants came from 59 worldwide bases or operating locations to share ideas, expertise and issues of concern.

Active Duty Senior Enlisted  
(n=50)



Service Branch	Senior Enlisted	Spouses
Army	16	10
Navy	11	9
Marine Corps	7	5
Air Force	15	13
Coast Guard	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>37</b>

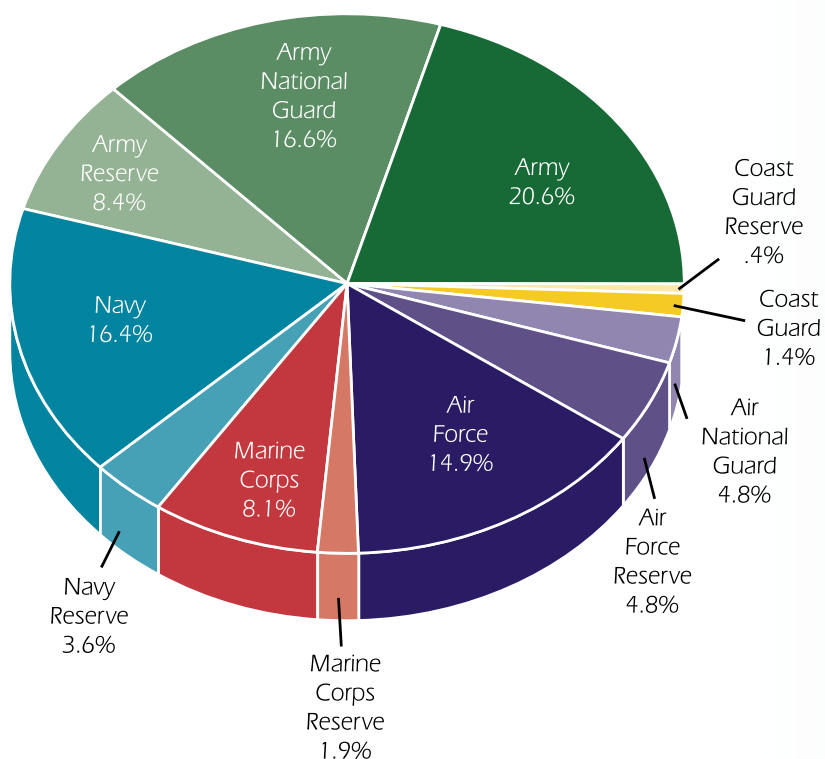
Reserve Senior Enlisted  
(n=29)



Reserve Component	Senior Enlisted	Spouses
Army National Guard	6	6
Army Reserve	5	3
Navy Reserve	3	3
Marine Corps Reserve	3	1
Air National Guard	5	4
Air Force Reserve	5	4
Coast Guard Reserve	2	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>23</b>

## Total Enlisted Force

The United States armed forces are comprised of more than 1.8 million enlisted active duty and reserve personnel.



Service Branch	Enlisted
Army	396,155
Navy	314,286
Marine Corps	154,830
Air Force	286,170
Coast Guard	27,397
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,178,838</b>

Reserve Component	Enlisted
Army National Guard	319,161
Army Reserve	161,930
Navy Reserve	69,999
Marine Corps Reserve	35,947
Air National Guard	92,424
Air Force Reserve	55,557
Coast Guard Reserve	6,808
<b>Total</b>	<b>741,826</b>



# Recruiting and Retention

## Issue

*The military needs to strengthen its bonds with the American public. Today, fewer officials, parents, teachers, counselors, or employers have experienced military service and therefore are not in a position to advise youth on military life.*

## Background

Fewer Americans have military experience than ever before. With a smaller force serving at fewer bases, there are increasingly fewer Americans who have direct experience with our military. Fewer people know someone who serves—or has served—in uniform. The transition from the draft to an all-volunteer force in the early 1970s also decreased broad military experience, knowledge, and understanding. Today, fewer elected officials, journalists, teachers, business owners, and employers have experienced military service.

## Current Status

Strengthening the bonds between the American public and the military has been a key priority of Secretary Cohen throughout his tenure at the Department of Defense. The military really mirrors our society. The American people need to recognize the relevance of our military to their daily lives and the outstanding quality of our servicemembers.

## Current Initiatives

The Department is in the process of reconnecting the military with American society. One example is the Yahoo! Fantasy Careers Contest that took place from Armed Forces Day through Independence Day. This contest provided civilian Americans the opportunity to meet the extraordinary men and women of the United States Armed Forces by allowing five individuals to experience a day in the life of a soldier, sailor, marine, airman or coast guardsman. Another way the Department is trying to close the gap is by educating the adult influencers (parents, family members, teachers, coaches, etc.) of youth on the opportunities and benefits of military service. This will be accomplished through national print and regional television advertising as well as a new Web site, [www.todaysmilitary.com](http://www.todaysmilitary.com).



*“Look at presenting the military to the American public as more than just a job with benefits and education . . . that we appeal to the young people to be a part of something bigger and better than themselves.”*

*—Master Gunnery Sergeant  
Patricia Orsino*





## Issue

*There is a need to market the right image to the American public. The military is more than pay and benefits; it is commitment and a patriotic duty. Marketing campaigns may have focused too much on education benefits and not enough on the individual lifestyle transformation that results from being part of something bigger and better than oneself.*

## Background

The strongest employment opportunities in the history of the All-Volunteer Force, coupled with increased college attendance by high school graduates, combine to present significant challenges as we seek to win the war for talent. Nonetheless, recruit quality across the Services remains high.



## Current Status

Today, there is a war for talent. The Department continues to fight this war by making the American public more aware of the opportunities, benefits and privileges of military service.

## Current Initiatives

Each of the Services and DoD work with advertising agencies to craft the correct message for the target audience. Some Services more easily portray the intangible benefits of the military than others. Nonetheless, DoD advertising seeks to communicate to adult influencers the tangible and intangible benefits of military service. Both are important aspects of what the military has to offer young people. This message needs to be communicated to an audience that increasingly has very little experience with the military.



## Issue

*While advertisers often go to great lengths to market life in the military as a very realistic mental and physical challenge, recruiting campaigns can foster unrealistic expectations of military life. Recruits and young servicemembers are dissatisfied and are leaving the military. Often, they are not challenged at their first duty stations after completing initial entry training, nor are they utilized in jobs that fit their skills or training. For the first time, mid- to senior-level personnel are leaving as well and retention bonuses for those beyond 14 years of service may be needed.*

## Background

While aggregate retention continues to show improvement, there are continuing concerns in a number of enlisted technical specialties such as maintenance technicians, intelligence analysts, communications-computer operators/repairers, linguists, and air traffic controllers.



## Current Status

Current reenlistment bonus programs offer payments to selected individuals with between 17 months and 14 years of service. This bonus window allows the department to offer additional incentives to highly skilled or shortage career fields as they reach critical retention decision points. To date, the 17-month to 14-year window has proven sufficient in light of our ability to adjust payment levels within that window.

## Current Initiatives

While current retention trend analysis does not indicate an increase in losses after 15 years of service, there is anecdotal feedback to the contrary. The Department will continue to study this issue closely and, should the situation warrant, request changes to existing legislation.

The issue of recruits and young servicemembers leaving because the military does not challenge them or allow them to fully utilize the skills in which they were trained is a challenge best addressed by the senior enlisted leadership within each Service's operational units.

## Issue

*PERSTEMPO is affecting the attitude of many military members. Happy members are our number one recruiters. The experiences they are carrying back to their communities do not always track with the message in current advertising. Many members believe they are being deployed too much or are doing twice the work in garrison while others are deployed.*



## Background

The Secretary of Defense and the Service Chiefs are aware of the impact that time away from home has on morale and the quality of life of our servicemembers. Service leadership has implemented measures that limit time away from home-station during the inter-deployment period.

## Current Status

Congress, in the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2000, requires the Department of Defense to establish uniform standards for policies relating to the deployment of units and personnel away from their duty stations and to establish uniform reporting systems for tracking deployments.

## Current Initiatives

The Department of Defense and Congressional leadership are defining individual tempo metrics. These metrics will document the time spent away from home and yield insight to the actual levels of tempo our people are experiencing, how these experiences affect retention, and how we can improve the quality of life for our all-volunteer force.

We are committed to maintaining both the near-term and long-term readiness of our armed forces through careful PERSTEMPO management.



## Issue

*Recruiters work under demanding circumstances. The duty is not voluntary and is driven by quotas, which are difficult to achieve. Recruiting duty needs to be made more desirable by offering more incentives and easing overall demands.*

## Background

Recruiters often work long hours under the stress of meeting assigned goals within a prescribed timeframe. Assignments to areas that are remote to military installations means a lack of military-sponsored support mechanisms and facilities and an increase in out-of-pocket expenses.

## Current Status

In response to today's recruiting challenges, the Department has formulated and is executing a number of reengineering and privatization initiatives. Initiatives are being tested to evaluate their ability to create or enhance military awareness, identify and exploit new recruiting markets, improve recruiter efficiency and effectiveness, and enhance recruiter quality of life. Further, the tests are focusing on recent advances in technology and will leverage existing resources for a better return on investment. Given today's recruiting challenges, it is paramount that the Department develop innovative strategies to attract, manage, and retain high-quality servicemembers.

## Current Initiatives

To create new market opportunities, we are enhancing and expanding DoD presence on the Internet, testing civilian telemarketing encompassing both inbound and outbound calling, and exploring innovative ways to penetrate the minority market and the college and college-bound market.



To improve recruiter efficiency and effectiveness, we are developing a prototype virtual on-line recruiting station, testing remote enlistment processing, testing the effectiveness of civilian administrative assistants in recruiting offices, automating fingerprinting capability at Military Entrance Processing Stations, and promoting recruiter quality-of-life initiatives.

The Department proposed legislation to increase the level of Special Duty Assignment Pay and to authorize reimbursement of Privately Owned Vehicle (POV) parking for recruiters. Both the Senate and the House have

endorsed these provisions, and we expect enactment within the next few months. We will then work with the Military Services to develop implementation plans and timelines.

In response to concerns about access to quality, affordable health care for active duty members such as recruiters, assigned to remote locations, the TRICARE Prime Remote Program was established. It will provide TRICARE Prime-like benefits (with no deductibles or cost-shares) to active duty members nationwide who work and live more than 50 miles from a military hospital or clinic.



# Compensation

## Issue

*Recent pay table reforms may not provide a sufficient “pay incentive” spike for E5s and E7s that recognizes the increased level of responsibility and authority attendant with promotion to those grades and exacerbated by downsizing. Further, today’s NCOs have at least some college, work longer hours, and deploy more often.*

## Background

On January 1, 2000, the largest pay raise for all military members since 1981 was implemented. The FY 2001 raise is 3.7 percent, one-half percentage point higher than the Employment Cost Index. In addition to the across-the-board pay raise, targeted pay increases will be implemented with a pay table reform. The maximum targeted pay increases range up to 5.5 percent and will come on top of the 4.8 percent increase that all military personnel received on January 1, 2000. This is a one-time restructuring of the pay that will relieve compression between grades and shift the emphasis back to rewarding promotion rather than longevity.

## Current Status

Pay table reform clearly did not resolve all issues within the compensation arena, but it was a step in the right direction. The primary purpose of pay table reform was to reward faster promotion, and was not intended to be a reflection of the amount of college completed, hours worked, or responsibility, though certainly, those elements may contribute to faster promotion.

*“We looked at pay table reform . . . and felt that (it) needs to be looked at.”*

*—Army Command Sergeant Major Jesse Laye*

## Current Initiatives

This issue is being reviewed in detail by the Ninth Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation (QRMC), whose final report is due in December 2000. Specifically, the QRMC is examining how mid-grade and senior enlisted pay relates to pay of civilians with comparable levels of education. The QRMC is also examining if the increase in education, as well as levels of experience, responsibility and leadership of senior enlisted members warrants an increase in senior enlisted pay levels.

In addition, the amounts of enlistment and reenlistment bonuses for our enlisted members, and aviator and nuclear bonus for our officers have been increased. And, we have







implemented three new pays, Career Enlisted Flying Incentive Pay, Surface Warfare Officers Continuation Pay, and Special Warfare Officers Continuation Pay.

The Secretary has announced a housing allowance initiative with the objective of reducing the average out-of-pocket housing expense to zero by 2005.

Members of the Uniformed Services may be able to participate in the Federal Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) beginning late in 2001.

## Issue

*Local installation commanders may not be sufficiently aware that they need to get involved in providing information and data on off-base areas in which they want their people to live for DoD surveys to determine Basic Allowances for Housing (BAH) rates.*

## Background

Generally, the Service housing management/referral offices at each fort, base, station, and post are well aware of our request for housing information (suitable neighborhoods, lists of contacts, suitable apartment complexes, etc.). We have already received some excellent responses from the field. We agree, however, that installation commanders need to be more aware of the vital role played by local military housing/housing referral offices.

## Current Status

The degree of awareness varies from location to location. We have done, and are doing, as much as we (DoD and the Services) can to get the message out to commanders.

*DoD and the Services are engaged in an aggressive schedule of on-site visits, briefing commanders and senior enlisted personnel on the methodology of BAH and the need for command involvement in the BAH data collection.*

## Current Initiatives

The Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Personnel Policy has urged each of the Service Assistant Secretaries (M&RA) to “involve local commanders” and to help us ensure the “quality and accuracy of the data we use to compute BAH rates.” The Services have followed up with letters and phone calls of their own.

## Issue

*The “overuse” of bonuses may be creating a system of “haves” and “have nots” within the enlisted force.*

## Background

Bonuses are a necessary force-shaping tool, used primarily to recruit and/or retain particular critical specialties. Critical specialties are those that are in high demand both within, and outside of the military.



## Current Status

In today's military, many of our "high tech" specialties are critical. These members are being offered much higher wages and benefits outside the military and are being lured away, at a high cost to the military as years of irreplaceable experience and training are lost. Bonuses have proven to be one relatively effective way to retain these people.

*While aggregate retention continues to show improvement, there are continuing concerns in a number of enlisted technical specialties.*

## Current Initiatives

The QRMC is reviewing the purpose, structure and flexibility of the bonus program, and special and incentive pays in general, to improve their flexibility and effectiveness. The QRMC is also examining the balance between the level of basic pay and the amounts of special and incentive pays. It may be that the targeted bonus system is over-burdened because the basic pay table needs adjustment.

## Issue

*There are parity of pay issues for Reserve component members, including the criteria for Reserve retired pay, Reserve Component (RC) special and incentive pays, and housing allowances.*

## Background

An effective compensation system requires policies that apply equitably to Active and Reserve components. Over the past two decades, many improvements have been made to Reserve compensation. Also, Secretary Cohen issued a Total Force Policy directing the elimination of barriers to effective integration and to a seamless Total Force.

## Current Status

The downsizing of our armed forces, smaller Defense budgets, and a relatively steady number of operations, have resulted in the National Guard and Reserve being called on more often to support mission requirements and help ease the operational burdens of a smaller active duty military force. In this environment, it is important to ensure that the compensation system maintains a sense of fairness and relative pay comparability between full-time and part-time members.

## Current Initiatives

The Ninth Quadrennial Review of Military Compensation (QRMC) has agreed to review several major areas of compensation to determine relative parity.

**Retired Pay.** Changing the law to an age-60 benefit system for Reserve retired pay would result in a significant increase in outlays from the DoD retirement fund. However, in view of the substantial reliance upon the National Guard and Reserve to support operational missions today, the Department has tasked the QRMC with reviewing the issue of whether the Reserve retirement system should be amended to allow for receipt of Reserve retired pay prior to reaching age 60. The QRMC will examine a number of alternatives to the current system and consider recommendations for change.



**Special and Incentive Pays.** Selected Reserve members possessing the required duty skills and qualifications are authorized such pays while performing part-time duties at a rate of 1/30 of the compensation authorized for active duty members for each day of duty. This situation sometimes results in RC members receiving significantly less special or incentive pay in a month than Active component members, even though the Reservists may have the same training, maintain the same qualifications and

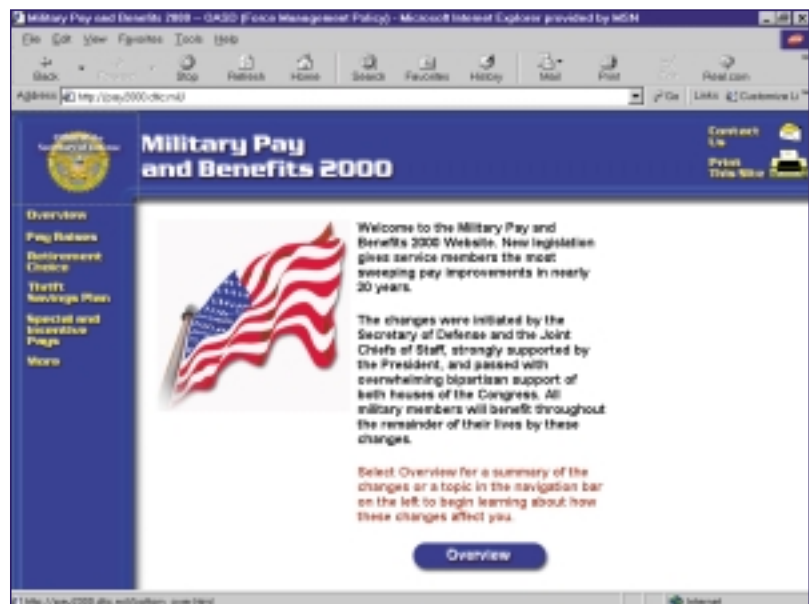
***Members of Reserve Components who accumulate 20 years of creditable service with the last eight years of qualifying service in a Reserve Component and who reach age 60, are entitled to retired pay based on the number of retirement points accumulated.***

proficiency and perform equal duties (e.g., flying hours). In the current environment of seamless integration and in view of the integral role the Reserve components are playing in meeting defense missions, the Department is reviewing the appropriateness and consistency of the rules that govern certain special and incentive pays for RC members.

**Basic Allowance for Housing (BAH).** Active component members receive a housing allowance, or BAH, that is structured for the local housing market

for every day they are on active duty. Reserve component members receive a flat rate housing allowance, or BAH-II, that is the equivalent to the former Basic Allowance for Quarters, for any active duty period of less than 140 days. Since Desert Storm, more RC members are serving longer periods on active duty, which means relying for greater periods of time on military pay and allowances, vice their civilian compensation, to pay for their civilian residence and related expenses. Thus, RC members living in high-cost areas may incur an immediate shortfall when ordered to active duty, based on the difference between civilian income and military income. The QRMCM is reviewing this issue in light of the fact that the Reserve component members continue to incur housing costs, just like Active component members, regardless of the length of their active duty.

**Additional information:**  
<http://pay2000.dtic.mil>





# Health Care

## Issue

*Spouses expressed interest in gaining information about local health care policies, transferring their Prime benefit, and health care services available to them including details on the civilian provider network, claims processing phone numbers and the location of TRICARE Service Centers. Spouses suggested participating in their sponsor's in-processing at new duty assignments.*

## Background

The Office of Customer Service and Beneficiary Education was created to assume primary responsibility for the customer service activities and beneficiary education communications of the TRICARE program. The staff manages and/or designs the production of a wide range of informational material used to assess customer attitudes and communication needs and develop Ombudsman strategies, activities and materials.

*“One of the biggest problems is that the family members do not know what TRICARE is supposed to do for them or how to get service when its needed.”*

*—Air Force Chief Master Sergeant  
Renee Chapman*

## Current Status

The Medical-Personnel Issues Forum, an initiative begun in June 1999, is currently working on the issue of health care information being readily available to newly arriving personnel. Working groups are looking at ways to ensure that complete and uniform local TRICARE information is offered during in-processing, and at other times, at all military installations worldwide.



## Current Initiatives

**Beneficiary Counseling and Assistance Coordinators (BCACs).** The establishment of these positions at Lead Agent offices and at all military hospitals was mandated in the FY00 Authorization Act. Formerly known as Health Benefits Advisors, Ombudsmen, Patient Advocates, and other customer service titles, the BCAC serves as the beneficiary advocate and problem-solver, responding to phone, written, and verbal concerns and questions from our beneficiaries. BCACs troubleshoot complicated, delayed, or mishandled problems between the beneficiary, TRICARE Service Centers, Managed Care Support Contractors, or the TRICARE Management Activity (TMA). We are developing a tracking/trending mechanism to better serve our beneficiaries, provide management information for decision makers, and to provide “early warning” on adverse trends in beneficiary feedback. The worldwide BCAC Directory was posted on our TMA Web site in June 2000.

**Debt Collection Assistance Officers (DCAOs).** DCAOs will assist service members in solving outstanding medical bills. Billing errors and payment misunderstandings have resulted in some service members receiving notices from collection agencies and bad credit ratings. DCAOs can intercede with all agencies involved, including military personnel offices, military hospitals and clinics, lead agents, network providers,





TRICARE Management Activity (TMA), and managed care support contractors. Once contacted by a beneficiary, DCAOs have authority to research cases and bring them to conclusion. DCAOs are available at all military hospitals and clinics and at TRICARE lead agent offices. A DCAO directory can be found on the Military Health System/TRICARE Web site at <http://www.tricare.osd.mil/dcao/>.

**Sources for further information.** Helpful information and all current policies are available on the TRICARE Web site at [www.TRICARE.osd.mil](http://www.TRICARE.osd.mil). Other helpful sources include Beneficiary Counseling and Assistance Coordinators (BCACs) at Lead Agent offices and all military hospitals, and TRICARE Service Centers.

## Issue

*TRICARE network providers limit the number of patients they see and leave the TRICARE program because of insufficient compensation and untimely reimbursement. A letter should be sent to those providers whose participation has expired, detailing program improvement, particularly with respect to authorized payment procedures.*



## Background

Provider participation in TRICARE is affected by claims processing, reimbursement rates, and network adequacy. Many providers have expressed concern over slow claims processing, which involves the accurate and appropriate settlement of health care bills based upon the rules, policies and requirements of DoD. Some providers are concerned about the reimbursement rates in TRICARE. Congress directed DoD to adopt or adapt Medicare payment approaches when appropriate. DoD's network adequacy requirements are based on California's Knox-Keene Act, which provides guidelines for health maintenance organizations (HMOs) on numerous aspects of access-to-care, including network adequacy ratios and the amount of time it takes to drive to a provider's office. In addition to these standards, most of DoD's managed care support contractors (MCSC) elected to use more stringent guidelines for certain types of specialty care.

## Current Status

TRICARE claims processing is complex due to factors such as numerous eligibility categories; different cost-shares, deductibles, and benefits based on these categories; three distinct programs (Prime, Extra and Standard) with different processing requirements; and more.

In adapting Medicare's payment approaches to TRICARE, it has been vital to recognize the differences in the programs and the populations they serve, and to accommodate those differences in the payment process. For some providers, there is no Medicare coverage, and in these cases DoD has developed its own reasonable, cost-effective reimbursement approaches. A key principle of DoD's reimbursement reform has been the protection of beneficiary access to care.

While the overall network appears to be adequate, we know there are some deficiencies in rural areas, particularly areas considered medically under-served and those with few managed care networks. These conditions are not unique to TRICARE. Our MCSCs have addressed network adequacy issues through various means, such as bringing in non-local providers on a temporary basis or negotiating with non-contracted providers to accept TRICARE payment.



The TRICARE civilian network, like other provider networks, experiences providers joining and leaving on a fairly continual basis. The reasons are numerous and do not always represent dissatisfaction with the network or TRICARE.

Regarding the recommendation to send letters to providers whose participation has expired, the Provider Relations Department at each MCSC communicates with and assists any provider considering joining or returning to the TRICARE network.

## Current Initiatives

The TRICARE Management Activity, along with DoD's Managed Care Support Contractors (MCSCs), developed a Claim Processing Enhancement Plan. Current initiatives under the Plan will address improvements in provider authorization procedures, obtaining additional claims information, claims processing timeliness standards, utilization management reviews, and processing third-party liability claims.

We are working to implement a proposal that would allow the Secretary of Defense to authorize higher provider payments than normally allowable, when it is necessary to ensure an adequate TRICARE Prime network of qualified providers. Additional actions being considered that would be taken when TRICARE beneficiaries face very severe limitations on access to needed health care services, include authorizing higher TRICARE payments than would normally be allowable for professional services in a designated location.

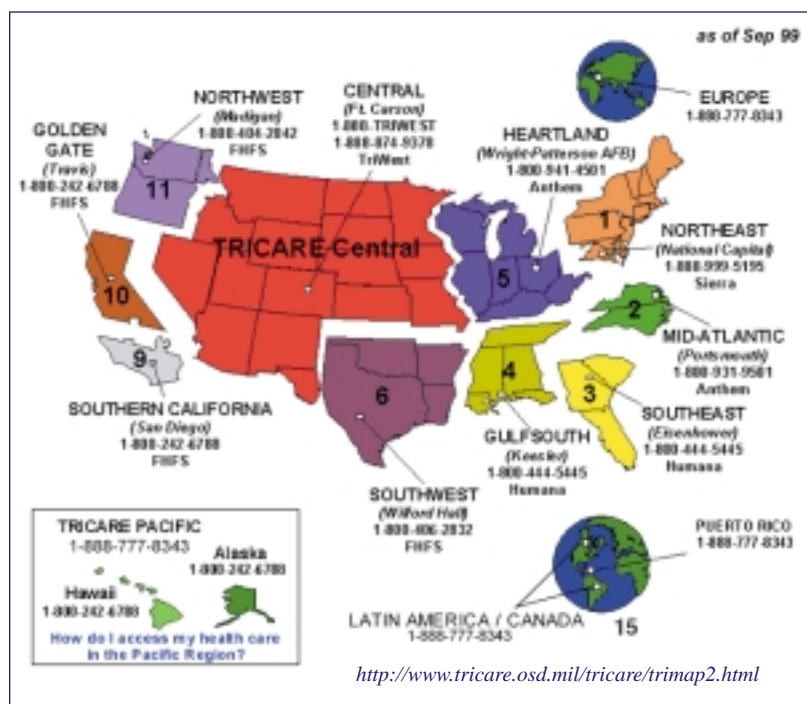
The TRICARE Prime Remote program began last year for active duty members. This new TRICARE initiative allows servicemembers who are assigned significant distances from a military hospital to receive care in their local area. We have asked the Congress for authority to extend this program to the families of our active duty personnel assigned to remote or distant locations. We expect that the authority will be granted this year and we will extend the program shortly thereafter.

## Issue

*There needs to be greater consistency of TRICARE service across the regions. Standardized procedures would assist beneficiaries in obtaining needed health care when they are temporarily out of their home region for such reasons as temporary duty, leave, or children attending college.*

## Background

The TRICARE benefit, that is the services covered and cost shares involved, remains identical across the country. Differences in administration are found from region to region, and this arises from an emphasis on individual patient needs within the framework of a cost-effective managed care program. When going to a new region, even temporarily, beneficiaries should contact the Beneficiary Counseling and Assistance Coordinator (BCAC) in the Lead Agents Office or in the military hospital in the new region to determine how best to meet their health care needs under differing Regional guidelines.



## Current Status

Managed Care Support Contractors (MCSC) set criteria for pre-authorization of particular services within their region based on treatment patterns in that area. Lead Agents may establish particular administrative approaches based on their knowledge of the local health care environment. The Lead Agent concept is based on having health care decisions made on a local level, taking into account the uniqueness of each region. Allowing this variation in administration ensures that physicians, following appropriate medical criteria, determine treatment received by patients, rather than having treatment options constrained by rigid, program-wide controls.

## Current Initiatives

**Portability of Benefits across Regions.** In January 2001, the MCSC for TRICARE will become responsible for enrollment of TRICARE beneficiaries, including Active Duty personnel. At present, military hospitals have this responsibility.

The TRICARE Service Centers (TSCs) will collect enrollment applications for those assigned within their service area during a sponsor's in-processing. The MCSC will compare the information on the application with the information in DEERS. Provided the information is consistent and the beneficiary is eligible, the contractor will initiate the enrollment process.

Having the MCSC responsible for enrollment will provide a more centralized, streamlined, and universal process, thus producing a more continuous and consistent benefit. The success of this approach will depend on updated information being provided to the MCSCs as soon as a change takes place for any beneficiary. All beneficiaries can assist this process by ensuring that their information in DEERS is accurate and by updating that information as soon as their information changes.

MCSCs will use a standardized, universal enrollment form for all TRICARE Prime enrollees. A standardized TRICARE Prime enrollment card will be issued to each Prime enrollee. This card will contain a Region-specific 1-800 number for enrollees to call the MCSC with any health care questions or needs.

**Primary Care Manager Assignment.** Although the new enrollment card will not have pre-printed Primary Care Managers (PCM) names on them when sent to beneficiaries, beneficiaries will receive letters from military hospitals or Managed Care Support Contractors indicating the names of their PCMs. The card will contain erasable fields for the PCM name and telephone number, so the beneficiary can fill it in and make changes as necessary.



## Issue

*When a military family needs emergency care, it should be available right away without administrative delays.*

## Background

In March 1997, President Clinton appointed the Advisory Commission on Consumer Protection and Quality in the health care industry. He charged this Commission to advise “on changes occurring in the health care system and recommend measures as may be necessary to promote and assure health care quality and value, and protect consumers and workers in the health care system.” As part of its work, the President asked the Commission to draft a “consumer bill of rights.”

*“Consumers have the right to access emergency health care services when and where the need arises.”*

*—Presidential Advisory Commission  
on Consumer Protection and Quality  
in the Health Care Industry*

## Current Status

In its report, the Commission stated that, “Consumers have the right to access emergency health care services when and where the need arises. Health plans should provide payment when a consumer presents to an emergency department with acute symptoms of sufficient severity—including severe pain—such that a ‘prudent layperson’ could reasonably expect the absence of medical attention to result in placing that consumer’s health in serious jeopardy, serious impairment to bodily functions, or serious dysfunction of any bodily organ or part.” Emphasis is placed on the patient’s presenting symptoms rather than the final diagnosis.

## Current Initiatives

TRICARE’s policy encompasses the Commission’s recommendations and the “prudent layperson” standard. Under TRICARE, emergency department care is covered for medical, maternity, or psychiatric emergencies that would lead a “prudent layperson” (someone with average knowledge of health and medicine), to believe that:

- a. A serious medical condition exists, or
- b. The absence of medical attention would result in a threat to his/her life, limb, or sight and requires immediate medical treatment, or
- c. The patient is experiencing severe pain and needs immediate relief.

Additionally, TRICARE’s policy states that claims must be processed based on the patient’s presenting symptoms rather than the discharge diagnosis. The policy also contains a provision that the Managed Care Support Contractor shall not retrospectively deny claims because a condition which appeared to be a serious medical condition when presenting to the emergency department turned out to be non-emergency based on the final diagnosis. In other words, claims shall not be denied in situations where the beneficiary presents to the emergency department with a condition that would cause a prudent layperson to believe an emergency exists, but the final diagnosis is determined to be a non-emergency condition. A common example of this is when a beneficiary seeks treatment for chest pain, but the final diagnosis is indigestion.

Emergency department services do not require pre-authorization. A denied claim for emergency department care is an appealable issue.

We have implemented the prudent layperson standard in all TRICARE Regions in the U.S. except in Region 1. In Region 1, all emergency department claims will be paid while implementation of the prudent layperson standard is pending.





# Child Care

## Issue

*There are insufficient child care slots to meet the child care need. Waiting lists are long and finding alternative child care places a burden on families, especially dual military couples and single parents.*

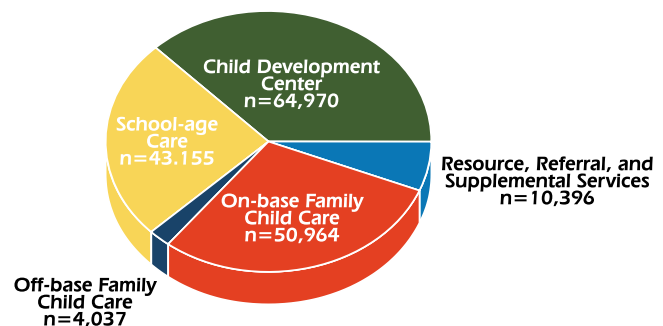
## Background

As of March 2000, the Military Services had 173,522 child care spaces and were meeting 58 percent of the projected need for 297,635 spaces. The Department of Defense (DoD) has set a short-term goal of meeting 65 percent of the need by the year 2003 and, ultimately, 80 percent by the year 2005.

## Current Status

Recognizing the demand for child care and youth programs, Congress passed Section 584 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2000, "Support for Expanded Child Care Services and Youth Program Services for Dependents." The legislation provides flexibility to expand and enhance the current program. As a result, the Services have proposed that a variety of pilot tests be conducted.

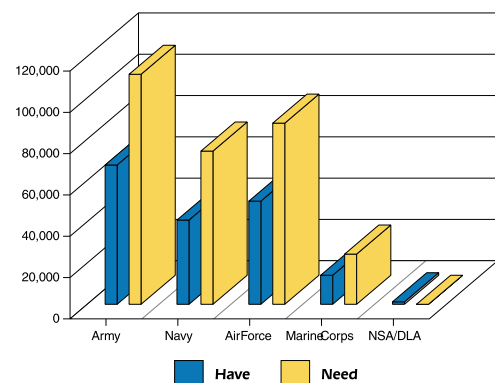
**Total Number of  
Child Care Spaces  
n=173,522**



## Current Initiatives

All four Services have expanded their Family Child Care (FCC) programs to include off-base affiliations to certify providers who live in neighborhoods where a significant number of military personnel reside. Off-base providers receive oversight, training, and support from the military FCC program similar to on-base FCC homes. Approximately 250 off-base providers offer child care including extended care hours. Another alternative to expand care was initiated by the Navy to contract for spaces in qualifying child development centers (CDC). The process involved "buying down" rates so parents paid the same rate as they would have paid in an on-base center, and contracts were awarded in Norfolk and Jacksonville. The Army is exploring two innovative options to significantly expand availability of extended hours care. The first proposal offers a paradigm shift from a single certified FCC home to that of FCC group homes. This proposed option would allow two or more FCC providers serving 7 to 12 children to provide care in unoccupied quarters on the installation. A second proposed

**Need for Child Care  
Spaces by Service**





option establishes a formal relationship between a CDC and any FCC home(s) located nearby. Dubbed “Satellite Homes,” this arrangement would be used to provide early morning/early evening “wrap around” care. The Navy has initiated an innovative three-prong marketing strategy to improve the image of the in-home provider in the community; to recruit new providers to the field; and to increase enrollment in their Child Development Homes (CDH). The Services have initiated partnerships with the local schools to expand the availability of care in school-age programs. The U.S. Marine Corps has increased their endeavors to meet the needs of Independent Duty Personnel. They are currently conducting a needs assessment to determine the extent of the child care need and, upon completion of the assessment, will work with other Services’ resource and referral and FCC programs where available.

## Issue

*A lack of sufficient child care providers in Europe was highlighted. Staffing is part of the problem. The adequacy of compensation needs to be examined.*

## Background

Public Law and DoD policy require that the rates of pay for CDC caregiving staff be equivalent to rates of pay for other employees at the same installation with comparable training, seniority, and experience. The Department further requires salary increases to be tied to the completion of training milestones to ensure that higher pay would result in a higher quality and more stable workforce.

## Current Status

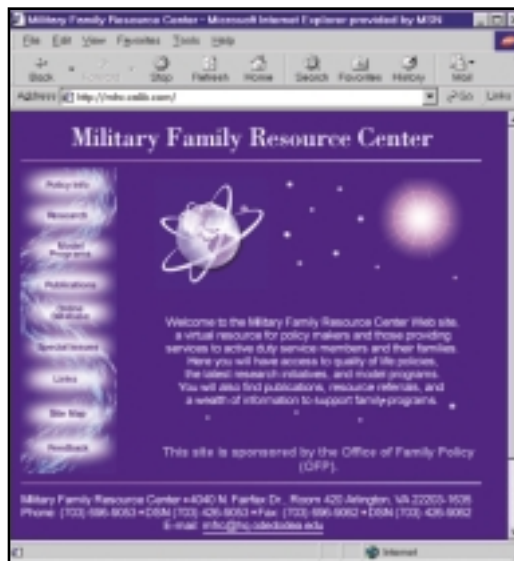
DoD uses a pay banding system for non-appropriated fund (NAF) employees. This gives managers the flexibility to increase an employee’s pay within the range to compete with local jobs and helps with recruitment and retention. However, despite this flexibility, it is a challenge to maintain and/or expand the supply of CDC staff in this highly competitive economy since caregivers now have a variety of job choices, with widespread opportunities offered in their local communities.

Today, a CDC caregiver with a high school diploma starts at nearly \$8.00/hour, approximately \$1.04 more than their civilian counterparts. Eligible staff also receive insurance, leave, and retirement benefits.

## Current Initiatives

The Office of Children and Youth is working to formulate a DoD task force to study compensation issues and staff recruitment challenges. A two-year pilot program will be tested in the European theater. The test will apply Military Spouse Preference (MSP) to appropriated and non-appropriated fund positions without time limitation regardless of work schedule and excludes temp/term appropriated and NAF positions from MSP coverage.

**Additional Information:** <http://mfrc.calib.com>





## Issue

*DoD needs to consider subsidies for those who offer infant care. FCC providers have no incentive to accept infants because they can take greater numbers of older children and make more money.*

## Background

In 1989, Congress gave DoD the authority to provide direct cash subsidies to FCC providers. The intent was to provide child care at a cost comparable to the CDC program fees. Actual use of this authority has been sporadic until recently.

## Current Status

Providing cash subsidies is now viewed as the most promising vehicle to expand availability of child care DoD-wide. The ability of an installation to offer direct cash incentives of this nature is a key to success.

## Current Initiatives

All of the Services are actively pursuing the use of direct cash subsidies as an incentive to FCC providers to offer specialized services, such as evening care, weekend care, overnight care, long-term care, care for children with special needs, and infant and toddler care.

*“Our hours aren’t 8:00 to 5:00...and we need to extend those hours in child development centers so our children are taken care of while we’re at work so we can have peace of mind.”*

*—Navy Master Chief Petty Officer Donald Shaft*

## Issue

*Operating hours of child development centers (CDC) need to be extended and incentives offered to FCC providers to extend work hours. Child care is not available during extended duty and shift hours, which causes a burden on the commands because single parents and dual military aren’t available for duty when the CDC is not open.*



## Background

Extended care can include evening, overnight, and weekend care, and short and long-term care during deployments, and care when a military member is temporarily assigned to another location.

## Current Status

Centers across DoD operate 10 to 12 hours per day, Monday through Friday. Hours of operation are determined at the local level and are based on mission requirements, community needs, and availability of



funds. Installation commanders can extend operating hours to support such mission requirements as alerts, deployments, and physical training activities.

To accommodate irregular duty hours, DoD policy encourages the use of FCC homes. Depending on the need and location, anywhere from 25 to 65 percent of the certified pool of DoD FCC providers offer extended hours care.

## Current Initiatives

DoD recognizes extended hours care as a necessary service on which more and more families rely. This, in part, is due to increased deployments and the demanding role of the military mission. The Office of Children and Youth plans to assess the scope and frequency of the need for extended hours care in the Department. The Air Force has implemented a pilot test at six installations to study the effectiveness of a subcontractor contracting with FCC providers to offer extended care to eligible parents.

## Issue

*There is a lack of consistency in the management of child care programs and policies among the Military Services. The Military Services handle many issues differently, for example, waiting lists, multi-child discounts, hardship rulings, costs, hours, payments to “hold” child care slots, availability of care during school recesses. This is especially noticeable in multi-Service geographic areas and can cause morale problems.*

## Background

The DoD develops the overarching policies and each Service in turn issues regulations and is responsible for ensuring compliance with the DoD policy. As a result, Service guidance varies based on Service and local circumstances.

## Current Status

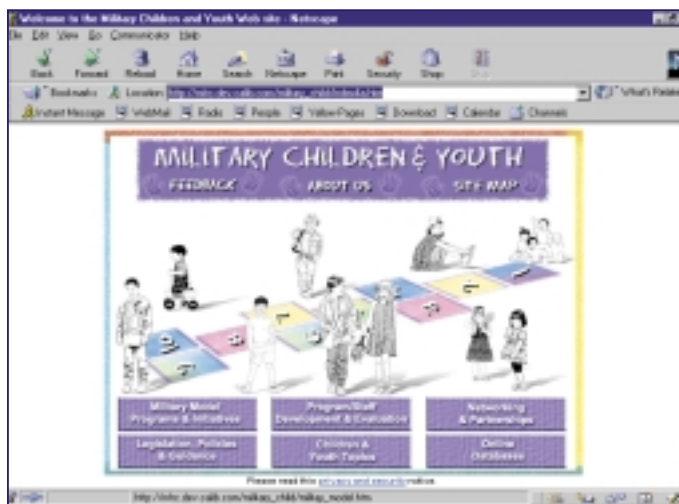
Installation commanders require flexibility in policy implementation in order to meet the unique needs of the local installation and mission.

## Current Initiatives

The Military Services’ program managers meet routinely to discuss current issues and program implementation. Strategies to address policy guidelines in multi-Service geographic areas will be reviewed.

**Additional information:**

<http://military-childrenandyouth.calib.com>







## Issue

*More pre-teen and teen programs are needed for youth who are “too old for day care but too young to drive.” They prefer stimulating activities at physical locations that are separate from the youth center. Activities might include youth fitness centers, computer labs, summer activities, mentoring programs by older teens and transportation to off-base programs.*

## Background

There are approximately 300,000 youth ages 12 to 18 of active duty military members. Youth programs are offered in more than 400 youth centers and 300 locations worldwide. Traditionally, the Military Department's youth programs have been primarily focused on social, recreational and athletic activities.

## Current Status

Stakeholders from DoD and the Military Services, military youth, and private youth organizations engaged in a comprehensive planning process which produced the “Strategic Youth Action Plan.” The plan is DoD's roadmap for addressing Departmental, Military Service, and national issues regarding youth as we move into the 21st century. The plan also guides youth programming from predominately recreational to developmental. The action plan can be accessed on the Military Children and Youth Web site at <http://military-childrenandyouth.calib.com>.



## Current Initiatives

The Office of Children and Youth is committed to implementing the objectives included in the Strategic Youth Action Plan to ensure the issues of military youth, such as expanded programming and separate facilities, are properly addressed. DoD is in the process of drafting an instruction for youth programs and services that will provide overarching policy for this age group. All four Services sponsor teen forums that bring teens together to identify the issues that affect their well-being and give them a voice in the directions of their programs. Identified issues are then presented to the Service leadership by the teens. In the summer of 2001, DoD will sponsor a youth congress to bring together teen representatives from all Services in a joint teen forum. The Department and the Boys and Girls Clubs of American (B&GCA) collaborate to enhance and expand services for military youth. About 85 percent of our programs have been affiliated with the B&GCA. Affiliated programs receive technical assistance from B&GCA staff in program planning and training opportunities. DoD, B&GCA, Department of Justice (DoJ), and the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) developed a partnership to address the unique needs of youth in military communities. The partners are working together to provide programs and training designed to deter at-risk youth behavior.

In addition, a community assessment process is in the design phase. The purpose of this assessment is to provide installation commanders with strategies to address significant problems. DoD sponsors a Web site: <http://dticaw.dtic.mil/mtom> to help preteens and teens make positive connections in their new community as they relocate. Military Teens on the Move (MTOM) is a collection of information for teens organized within six main topic areas: relocation, youth sponsorship, schools, installations, Internet use, and general topics (health, relationships, and careers). A Healthy Parenting Initiative was recently established in partnership with the Services, the Office of Military Community and Family Policy, and Virginia Tech University to develop military-specific parent resources for infancy through adolescence.



# Schools, Education, and Quality of Life

## Issue

*The quality of education provided in public schools in the United States varies widely. In some locations surrounding military bases, test scores for local public schools are well below the national average. Military parents in these areas may be faced with few options other than home schooling or the financial burden of sending their children to a private school. What about a voucher system?*

*“We have asked them [DoD] to explore providing tuition assistance to spouses.”*

*“In some areas where service members are assigned, test scores for local public schools are well below the national average.”*

*—Mrs. Laura Ball,  
Air Force Member’s wife*

## Background

There are more than 965,000 children ages 3 to 18 in military families. DoD schools—both overseas and stateside—educate about 110,000 students. That means that more than 850,000 military connected students attend education programs in civilian communities. Until recently, no office or agency within DoD has had the specific responsibility to advocate for those students not attending DoD schools.



## Current Status

Within the United States, DoD has no legislative authority or funding to operate a voucher system for alternative education or to reimburse military parents for costs associated with their placing their child in a tuition-paying or private school. The presumption is that all students whose military parent is stationed in the US may attend free public schools. DoD recognizes that instruction and achievement varies between states and schools, and has recently created an Education Opportunities Directorate to address education issues and concerns affecting the quality of kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade educational opportunities for all military connected students, whether in DoD schools or in local school districts in the US. The end result should be a continuum of quality education for all military children, no matter where their sponsors are assigned.

## Current Initiatives

The Education Opportunities Directorate will take the first step in working issues with its Texas Round Table Discussions. This is the first in a series of planned regional round table discussions on youth and education, focused on identifying the unique issues and challenges confronting the school age children of our mobile military population and the local education agencies (LEAs) that serve them. An additional outcome of these discussions will be the development of partnerships and supporting mechanisms that will benefit both students and LEAs.



This “Connect with America on Education” initiative is an unprecedented opportunity to share, listen, and learn about the school experiences and how they affect the likelihood of a military child’s current and potential academic success. Included in discussions will be state education policymakers, senior leaders representing both the military and the education communities, military parents, teachers, school counselors, and military connected students. Other State Round Tables will be conducted to gather information. A senior leader meeting will follow the round table discussions. At this meeting, leaders from the Military Departments, the Department of Education and interested stakeholder groups and associations that deal with military community and education issues will meet to identify obstacles to success in the categories of funding, legislation, legal, policy and practice.

Finally, a national planning session will focus on better educational opportunities for all military children by calling together members of the Military Departments along with State educational leaders, the Office of Management and Budget and congressional members from impacted states to develop a strategic agenda to enhance school improvements.

Concurrently, working with DoDEA, a military/community school partnership program similar to the sister city concept will be explored. Through this program, DoDEA schools could be partnered with local school districts serving military students to promote shared experiences, common lessons plans, collaboration on a number of school activities, and shared video and computer lessons.

## Issue

*The current ceiling on tuition assistance (TA) for servicemembers (\$3,500) is too low and needs to be reevaluated. The cap forces active duty and reserve personnel to go to schools of lesser quality or pay significant amounts out of their own pockets. Provide higher TA based on years of service.*

## Background

Effective October 1, 1999, the Services implemented a DoD-wide uniform tuition assistance policy that had been agreed upon in 1997. Prior to that time, each Service had a different policy and, in most years, tuition assistance was reduced or curtailed during the year and, in many years, funds were depleted before everyone was able to receive some of the benefit. The uniform policy was implemented to ensure that members of all Services had available to them the same level of support and that such a level of support would be available for the entire fiscal year. The \$3,500 ceiling helps ensure that funds are not depleted.

## Current Status

Review of costs and tuition assistance usage during fiscal 1999 suggests that \$3,500 is sufficient for most members. Less than 10 percent of all participants reached the ceiling, and the average cost per participant was well below the ceiling.

## Current Initiatives

The Interservice Voluntary Education Working Group has considered changes to the uniform policy on tuition assistance, including changes to the course cap and annual ceiling. Each Service was asked to evaluate the question and make recommendations regarding changes to both the course cap and the annual ceiling. At least one Service recently considered providing greater amounts of tuition assistance based on years of service. The issue will be re-introduced as part of future discussions on raising caps and ceilings.



Any changes to tuition assistance or voluntary education policy are published on the DoD Voluntary Education Web site: <http://www.voled.doded.mil>.

## Issue

*Explore providing tuition assistance to spouses, especially those located overseas. Currently, no tuition assistance is provided for advanced education. Also, States do not provide the same benefits for spouses that are offered to servicemember residents with respect to college enrollment and tuition. Military families would like to see DoD publicize grants and tuition assistance offered through Service aid societies and enlisted associations.*



## Background

DoD has been exploring options for providing education-related financial assistance to military spouses, and will continue to seek ways in which to assist spouses interested in pursuing educational opportunities.



## Current Status

Spouses of active duty military personnel stationed overseas are provided tuition assistance by Service-related aid and relief organizations. Army Emergency Relief (AER), Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society (NMCRS), and Air Force Aid Society (AFAS) are private non-profit organizations. Historically, they have raised money in order to provide financial assistance to servicemembers and their families in time of emergency. More recently, that role has been expanded to include tuition assistance for spouses accompanying military personnel assigned overseas.

## Current Initiatives

The Army Emergency Relief (AER) “spouse education assistance program” is the newest program among the Services. Spouses of soldiers assigned to the United States Army, Europe (USAREUR) are eligible to receive awards of up to half the cost of tuition, to a maximum of \$350 per term, for each of five terms per year. Assistance is provided for both post-secondary undergraduate studies, as well as for vocational training.

The Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society conducts the “spouse tuition aid program” for spouses of active duty Navy and Marine Corps personnel stationed overseas. Aid is available for full- or part-time study as follows: \$300 per term for vocational or undergraduate study and \$350 per term for graduate study. Support is provided for up to five terms per year. The Society also offers a scholarship and loan program. Spouses of active duty members are eligible, regardless of location; however, they must be full-time undergraduate students. Each year, 1,000 scholarships of \$2,000 each are awarded. Interest-free loans of up to \$3,000 are also available.



The Air Force Aid Society began its tuition assistance program for overseas spouses 10 years ago. The Society pays 50 percent of tuition charges up to a maximum of \$1,200 per academic year. On average, 20 percent of spouses on major overseas installations participate in the program.

Information about the programs mentioned above is available at family support centers in overseas commands or at education centers on military bases overseas. Many military installation Web sites have a page or link to a relief/aid society Web site.

## Issue

*Establish a single standard for high school graduation requirements. Graduation requirements differ from State to State, creating difficulties for the children of military families when they relocate due to a permanent change of duty station.*

## Background

The responsibility for education rests at the State and local level. The Department of Education has only general responsibility for the oversight of public education in the United States. It is highly unlikely that any single standard for high school graduation requirements will be established in the near future.

## Current Status

DoD is working in partnership with the Military Child Education Coalition to address educational issues—such as differences in graduation requirements—that impact military students when their military parents transfer to a new duty station.

## Current Initiatives

The Connect with America Round Table discussion, co-hosted by DoD and the Military Child Education Coalition, will focus on education issues relating to academics (e.g., State requirements, transfer of credits, student performance standards, student preparedness, relocation) funding, and military related issues (e.g., special concerns/needs of military students, desire for greater involvement such as representation on school boards; and opportunities for collaboration). The first Round Table discussion is planned for San Antonio, Texas, September 27-28, 2000.

### DoDDS and DDESS National Rankings for the NAEP Assessment 1994-1998

	1994 Reading	1996 Science	1996 Math		1998 Reading		1998 Writing
	4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	8 <sup>th</sup> Grade
DoDDS	9 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>
DDESS	**	9 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>

*\*\*DDESS did not participate as part of DoDEA.*

*On the 1998 NAEP test on writing, DoD students lead the nation. Among the 39 participating states and jurisdictions, no system scored significantly higher than DDESS, and only one State, Connecticut, scored significantly higher than DoDDS. In addition, DDESS had the highest percentage of students in the Nation scoring in the “Advanced” category on the exam.*



# Forum in Review



*"I'll tell you that one of the great joys of my life is to be able to travel around the world and to meet with Heads of State and my counterparts. And the first thing they ask me is, "How do we get to be like you? How do we get to have the kind of people you have in your military . . . ? How are you able to attract them, to keep them, to make the force that is a premier force in the world?"*

*—Secretary of Defense  
William S. Cohen*





*"Frankly, it made everybody here feel very important and it shows that the Secretary understands the importance of the senior enlisted. A lot of the issues the senior enlisted know about never get surfaced to the top. So this is a very special forum. I think it was very worthwhile."*

*—Army Command Sergeant Major Jesse Laye*



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